U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
White River Field Office
73544 Hwy 64
Meeker, CO 81641

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: CO-110-2005-008-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): COC3902

PROJECT NAME: Additional Expansion for Greasewood Compressor Station

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sixth Principal Meridian, Colorado
T. 2 S., R. 96 W.,
Sec. 5, lot 26.

APPLICANT: Xcel Energy (Public Service)

ISSUES AND CONCERNS (optional):

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:

Background/Introduction: An application has been received requesting additional expansion space for the Greasewood Compressor Station.

Proposed Action: The proposed project is to provide additional space for the continued operation of the existing Xcel Energy (Public Service) Greasewood Compressor Station. The Development Plan for the proposed expanded site consists of the following two components:

1. Expanded 270'x 440' Site – the requested additional 100' of right-of-way on the east side and south side of the site are necessary for the following reasons:

    a) Provide a firebreak area, where tall vegetation would be removed if/as necessary to protect the plant facilities from pending damage due to the spread of wild fires in the area. This need became evident the summer of 2004 when wild fires ravaged certain areas in the vicinity of the site.

    b) Provide suitable access for emergency vehicles on the east side of the compressor buildings, within the proposed site fence. Without the expanded lease, the east fence line would be within about 50' of one of the compressor buildings. With the proposed expanded lease, the east fence line is proposed to be placed roughly 100' from the compressor building.

c) Allow the east fence line to encompass the electric power pole which serves utility power to the site. This offers security protection, since it makes it difficult for vandals to tamper with the electric meter and associated electric service components.

d) Provide additional spacing between the proposed cathodic ground bed and the site facilities. The benefit of the ground be is diminished if it is placed too close to the site.

2. Cathodic Ground Bed – 10' x 205' Install a cathodic protection ground bed in the proposed right-of-way which extends diagonally away from the proposed northeast corner of the proposed expanded site. The ground bed is part of the corrosion protection design for the underground components within the facility, such as the natural gas pipelines. The effectiveness of the ground bed is dependent on its distance from the systems being protected. The closer the ground bed is to the facilities, the less effective the ground bed. A trench would be dug with a backhoe, ground bed components would be laid into the trench, and the trench would be backfilled. The ground bed right-of-way would not be fenced.

3. The firebreak will be scraped clear of vegetation and the slash hauled off to an approved dump facility. Future actions will include using chemicals to control invasive species or noxious weeds.

No Action Alternative: Under the no action alternative, the application would be denied and the situation would remain unchanged.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT CARRIED FORWARD: None

NEED FOR THE ACTION: An application has been received for additional expansion space for the Greasewood Compressor Station.

PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Decision Number/Page: Pages 2-24 thru 2-52

Decision Language: "To make public lands available for the siting of public and private facilities through the issuance of applicable land use authorizations, in a manner that provides for reasonable protection of other resource values."

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES / MITIGATION MEASURES:

STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC LAND HEALTH: In January 1997, Colorado Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved the Standards for Public Land Health. These standards cover upland soils, riparian systems, plant and animal communities, threatened and endangered species, and water quality. Standards describe conditions needed to sustain public land health and relate to all uses of the public lands. Because a standard exists for these five categories, a finding must be made for each of them in an environmental analysis. These findings are located in specific elements listed below:

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

AIR QUALITY

Affected Environment: The Piceance Creek basin has been designated a Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) class II air quality area by the state. The proposed actions will not compromise National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulate mater which calls for a maximum 24-hour average to be less than or equal to 150 $\mu g/m^3$.

Environmental consequences of proposed action: Removal of ground cover will leave soils exposed to eolian processes until mitigation is complete. Elevated levels of fugitive dust would result with strong winds and increased human activity during dry periods.

Environmental consequences of no action: none

Mitigation: Surface portions of the ROW that will receive high volumes of traffic with gravel or black top. Re-seed or gravel the remaining portion of the ROW to reduce fugitive dust production during wind events and periods of increased human activity.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Affected Environment: The area of the proposed expansion appears to be at a point where two previous inventories (Hauck 2001, Compliance Dated 6/11/2001, Pointkowski 1998, Compliance Dated 11/4/1998) have some overlap. No cultural resources were located in the inventoried area in and near the proposed compressor expansion area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed expansion will not impact any known cultural resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to cultural resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: 1. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing

historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation costs. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred object, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

INVASIVE, NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Affected Environment: The noxious weeds black henbane, houndstongue, yellow toadflax, mullien and bull thistle occur throughout the project in disturbed areas associated with roads, wells, pipelines and compressor stations as a result of oil and gas development in the area. The invasive alien cheatgrass also occurs on these same sites. Noxious and invasive species continue to be a problem in the Magnolia area. Herbicidal treatment, if it occurs, is done after the noxious biennials have produced seed and therefore is of marginal value.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action will create areas of soil disturbance which, if they are not promptly and effectively revegetated, will provide safe sites for the establishment of noxious weeds and cheatgrass.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation.

Mitigation: The operator will monitor the right-of-way for a minimum of five years post construction to detect the presence of noxious and invasive species. The operator will be

responsible for eradication of noxious weeds and cheatgrass on the right of way using materials and methods authorized in advance by the Field Manager.

MIGRATORY BIRDS

Affected Environment: An array of migratory birds fulfills nesting functions throughout Magnolia's sagebrush and serviceberry dominated habitats from late May through early August. Species associated with these shrubland communities are typical and widely represented in the Resource Area and region. Those bird populations identified as having higher conservation interest (i.e., Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Partners in Flight program) include Brewer's sparrow and green-tailed towhee. These birds are well distributed and common across Magnolia's extensive sagebrush and mixed shrub habitats.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Project construction will occur soon after authorization and will coincide with the later stages of nesting activity (late June). However, the compressor station is situated immediately adjacent to a busy graveled county road and existing compressor facility. Because breeding birds tend to avoid roadsides and industrial activity centers, nest densities can be expected to be about half that of undisturbed habitats within about 300' of such disturbance. The small size of this expansion (0.3 acres) and that fact that much (75%) of potential nesting habitat lies within 100' of existing forms of disturbance drastically limits the utility of this habitat parcel, as well as the likelihood of it supporting any more than 1 pair of breeding birds.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: The utility of this tract of land for breeding bird use would remain influenced by the county road and existing compressor plant as discussed above, but the incremental expansion of direct habitat occupation and disturbance of surrounding habitat would be avoided.

Mitigation: None

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE ANIMAL SPECIES (includes a finding on Standard 4)

Affected Environment: There are no threatened or endangered animal species known to inhabit or derive important benefit from the project locale. The Magnolia area hosts a small, remnant population of greater sage-grouse, a State sensitive species, that are the target of population and habitat restoration efforts by the BLM and CDOW. This sagebrush stand is situated on a narrow (500' wide) neck of habitat separating Magnolia's core sage-steppe habitats to the east (presently occupied by grouse) from ridgelines extending to the west and north. These westerly ridgelines support about 600 acres of former sage-steppe habitats that are now dominated by large serviceberry and encroaching pinyon pine. This part of Magnolia has probably been unsuitable for occupation by grouse for over 30 years. The project site is bisected by a heavily traveled field access road along which a series of other gas compressor stations extends to the east.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Although compressor expansion would have no further influence on physically obstructing access to grouse habitats available to the west and north (i.e., currently unsuitable for use), with the cumulative concentration of compressor facilities, roads and other forms of energy-related surface occupation (e.g., newly constructed pipeline right-of-ways, well pads) this site may, to a diminutive degree, further inhibit free movement of birds across this juncture in the event these habitats are restored in the future. Conversely, the placement of this facility in close proximity to a number of pre-existing facilities and heavily traveled access offers the advantage of limiting the effective expansion of development into suitable and occupied sage grouse habitats. Construction and operation of this facility would likely have little further influence on the Magnolia lek or surrounding potential nest habitat, which lies over 2 miles to the north-south-east.

In order to encourage the long-term success of any pioneering grouse in and around this facility, it is recommended that any additional above ground electric structures associated with the compressor station that may serve as a raptor perch (e.g., electric, telephone poles) be as low in stature as is safe and practical, and conditioned to effectively deter use by large raptors (i.e., eagles, buteo hawks, great horned owls) that may predate adult or young grouse. Furthermore, to promote restoration of sagebrush habitat and re-colonization by grouse, it is recommended that the removal of sagebrush be avoided in order to minimize adverse modification of sagebrush canopies.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: Failure to site this facility at this location may reduce the potential for further constricting the sagebrush corridor that provides a semblance of habitat continuity through this industrial complex. However, alternate locations would likely have involved more extensive long-term removal of sagebrush habitats at locations more distant from existing forms of disturbance and providing more functional value to the sage grouse population on Magnolia.

Mitigation: Any structure associated with the compressor station that may serve as a perch (e.g., electric, telephone poles) be as low in stature as is safe and practical and conditioned to effectively deter use by large raptors (i.e., eagles, buteo hawks, great horned owls). The methods selected for implementing this objective, as well as scaled drawings detailing these methods, should be provided for approval by the BLM Authorized Officer and included in the official case file.

Removal of tall vegetation (e.g., serviceberry, pinyon pine) will be permitted. However, removal of sagebrush must be addressed in a separate action if vegetation removal is deemed necessary to protect the plant from fire danger.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for Threatened & Endangered species: The proposed action would have no effect on the assessment of land health standards. The proposed facility location encompasses a sagebrush habitat patch where past and current land uses impair its utility for species requiring larger or more contiguous expanses of habitat (e.g., sage-grouse). On a localized basis, the project area (0.3 acre) would not meet Standard 4, but at larger spatial scales and in the context of this existing industrial-dominated site, the proposed action as

conditioned would have no substantive influence on the health and productivity of surrounding rangelands as habitat for special status species, and thus no effect on the status of the land health standard.

WASTES, HAZARDOUS OR SOLID

Affected Environment: There are no known hazardous or other solid wastes on the subject lands. No hazardous materials are known to have been used, stored or disposed of at sites included in the project area.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: No listed or extremely hazardous materials in excess of threshold quantities are proposed for use in this project. While commercial preparations of fuels and lubricants proposed for use may contain some hazardous constituents, they would be stored, used and transported in a manner consistent with applicable laws, and the generation of hazardous wastes would not be anticipated. Solid wastes would be properly disposed of.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

Mitigation: None

WATER QUALITY, SURFACE AND GROUND (includes a finding on Standard 5)

Affected Environment: The Greasewood Compressor Station is located in the Cole Gulch watershed which is a tributary to Piceance Creek (tributary to the White River). Cole Gulch is located in stream segment 16 of the White River Basin and has been designated as "Use Protected" by the state of Colorado. Segment 16 has been further classified as beneficial for the following uses: aquatic life warm 2, recreation 2, and agriculture. In addition, segment 16 has been given table values addressing water quality. These values indicate numeric standards for allowable physical, biological, inorganic and metal concentrations in surface water as addressed by the state of Colorado's water quality standards.

Environmental consequences of proposed action: Increased sediment loads may result due to removal of ground cover in the uppermost reaches of Cole Gulch. However, environmental impacts detrimental to the watershed are not anticipated when proper mitigation is completed.

Environmental consequences of no action: none

Mitigation: Re-seed or gravel the remaining portion of the ROW to reduce impacts of heavy rain and overland flows. Install proper drainage structures at necessary locations (e.g. culvert, drain dip).

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for water quality: The water quality within the area of the proposed action currently meets water quality standards established by the state. The proposed action will not have adverse impacts on water quality in stream segment 16.

WETLANDS AND RIPARIAN ZONES (includes a finding on Standard 2)

Affected Environment: There are no wetland or riparian communities that would be directly or indirectly influenced by this proposal.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on riparian or wetland habitat.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on riparian or wetland habitats under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for riparian systems: The proposed action would not affect achievement of the land health standard.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS NOT PRESENT OR NOT AFFECTED:
No ACEC's, flood plains, prime and unique farmlands, Wilderness, or Wild and Scenic Rivers, threatened, endangered or sensitive plants exist within the area affected by the proposed action. For threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species Public Land Health Standard is not applicable since neither the proposed nor the no-action alternative would have any influence on populations of, or habitats potentially occupied by, special status plants. There are also no Native American religious or environmental justice concerns associated with the proposed action.

NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The following elements **must** be addressed due to the involvement of Standards for Public Land Health:

SOILS (includes a finding on Standard 1)

Affected Environment: The following data is a product of an order III soil survey conducted by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The accompanying table highlights important soil characteristics. A complete summary of this information can be found at the White River Field Office.

Soil Number	Soil Name	Soil pH	Permeability	Water Capacity	Run Off	Erosion Potential	Ecological site	Slope

Soil Number	Soil Name	Soil pH	Permeability	Water Capacity	Run Off	Erosion Potential	Ecological site	Slope
15	Castner channery loam	6.6-7.8	0.6-6.0	0.12-0.16	Medium to rapid	Moderate to very high	Pinyon-Juniper woodlands	5-50%
42	Irigul channery loam	7.4-7.8	0.6-2.0	0.09-0.11	Medium to rapid	Very high	Loamy Slopes	5-50%
43	Irigul-Parachute complex	7.4-7.8	0.6-2.0	0.09-0.11	Rapid	Slight to high	Loamy Slopes/Mountain Loam	12-45%5-30%
59	Parachute-Rhone loams	6.6-7.8	0.6-2.0	0.16-0.18	Medium	Moderate to high	Mountain Loam	5-30%
104	Yamac Loam	6.6-8.4	0.6-2.0	0.16-0.20	Medium	Slight to moderate	Rolling Loam	2-15%

Environmental consequences of proposed action: Reduction in vegetation will leave soils exposed and accelerate erosional processes. Raindrop impact and strong winds will likely be the primary causes for erosion.

Environmental consequences of no action: none

Mitigation: See mitigation measures for air quality.

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for upland soils: The proposed action will reduce infiltration rates and soil permeability at the construction site. However, proper mitigation (as described in the air and water sections) will allow infiltration rates and soil permeability to return to functional values.

VEGETATION (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Prior to the extensive disturbance that has occurred , the existing vegetation was a mixed stand of mountain big sagebrush and Utah serviceberry with a diverse grass/forb understory. The ecological site is rolling loam/loamy slopes.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The principal impact to vegetation will be complete removal of vegetation on the plant expansion site and the earthen disturbance associated with it. In terms of plant community composition, structure and function, the principal negative impact over the long term would occur if invasive species or noxious weeds are allowed to establish and proliferate on the disturbed areas resulting from the proposed action

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation.

Mitigation: Promptly recontour and revegetate all disturbed areas with Native Seed mix # 2.

Native Seed Mix #2			
2	Western wheatgrass (Rosanna) Indian ricegrass (Rimrock) Bluebunch wheatgrass (Whitmar) Thickspike wheatgrass (Critana) Needle and thread Globemallow	2 1 2 2 1 0.5	Deep Loam, Loamy 10"-14", Loamy Breaks, Loamy Slopes, Rolling Loam, Valley Bench

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Wildlife, Aquatic and Wildlife, Terrestrial)*:* Plant communities in the project area currently meet the Standard and are expected to continue to meet the Standard following implementation of the proposed action.

WILDLIFE, AQUATIC (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: There are no aquatic habitats directly or indirectly involved with this proposal. The nearest aquatic habitat in Piceance Creek is separated from the project proposal by about 10 miles of ephemeral channel.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed action would have no conceivable influence on aquatic wildlife or habitat.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on aquatic wildlife or associated habitats under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Terrestrial): The proposed action would have no conceivable effect on the condition or function of far-removed aquatic habitats and would, therefore, have no effective influence on land health standards for aquatic wildlife.

WILDLIFE, TERRESTRIAL (includes a finding on Standard 3)

Affected Environment: Big game occupy the serviceberry and sagebrush steppe in and around the Magnolia complex, primarily from May through November. While raptors such as red-tailed hawks may opportunistically forage throughout the area, there is no suitable substrate for raptor nesting within the immediate vicinity.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proximity of this facility to the intersection of two major county roads and the existing industrial complex limits the overall influence on big game (i.e., direct and indirect habitat loss) to minor proportions.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no affect on terrestrial wildlife or associated habitats under the no action alternative.

Mitigation: None

Finding on the Public Land Health Standard for plant and animal communities (partial, see also Vegetation and Wildlife, Aquatic): The project site meets the land health standard for terrestrial communities. The proposed action would have no functional influence on attributes of community health.

OTHER NON-CRITICAL ELEMENTS: For the following elements, only those brought forward for analysis will be addressed further.

Non-Critical Element	NA or Not Present	Applicable or Present, No Impact	Applicable & Present and Brought Forward for Analysis
Access and Transportation		X	
Cadastral Survey	X		
Fire Management			X
Forest Management	X		
Geology and Minerals	X		
Hydrology/Water Rights	X		
Law Enforcement		X	
Noise	X		
Paleontology			X
Rangeland Management			X
Realty Authorizations		X	
Recreation		X	
Socio-Economics		X	
Visual Resources		X	
Wild Horses	X		

FIRE MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: The compressor station is situated within the B8 Magnolia Oil & Gas fire management polygon. "B" Polygons are areas where wildland fire is not desired. Fire suppression in these areas is/will be aggressive. There have been no recorded wildland fires within the perimeter of this polygon in the last 25 years; however there have been six wildland fires within one mile of the B8 fire management polygon consuming approximately two acres. The fuel loading within the B8 polygon is mountain big sagebrush in a mid-seral state with low to moderate fuel loading and continuity. The prevailing winds are generally southwest or south during the "wildfire" season. In the summer of 2003 BLM conducted 427 acres of "Wildland Urban Interface" hazardous fuel reduction within and around the B8 Magnolia Oil and Gas polygon to mitigate wildfire hazards to the compressor facilities and "man camp" facilities located within the B8 polygon.

The Greasewood fire of 2004 was managed for resource benefit and thus was not actively suppressed. That fire started 3.4 miles from the proposed action and ran in a north, northeast direction away from the proposed action. The fire started in a "D" polygon where wildland fire is desired and there a few to no constraints to its use to achieve resource management objectives.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: The proposed fuel break is well intended however in its present state would be both ineffective and unnecessary to provide wildfire protection for the facilities on the site. A BehavePlus computer model simulation of the expected fire behavior in mountain sagebrush, at the upper limit of extreme conditions, with 2% 1-hour fuel moisture, 3% 10-hour fuel moisture, and 75% live fuel moisture with 30 mile/hour sustained winds predicted a maximum flame length of 25ft. The existing vegetation clearances around the facilities currently provide adequate defensible space and minimal vegetation removal would provide an adequate fuel break distance for a wildfire burning under very extreme conditions. Due to the prevailing wind direction (south-southwest) the fuel break is on the wrong side of the facility to provide effective wildfire mitigation. The compressor plant is situated such that the county road provides a 40' fuel break on the southeast and west sides of the compressor station. A buried pipeline that spurs off of the Trans-Colorado right-of-way and runs to the north also provides an effective fuel break on the windward side. A wildland urban interface fuel reduction project conducted in 2003 by BLM provides the most substantial fuel break for the site, which is situated strategically around all of the compressor facilities on Magnolia Bench.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: None

Mitigation: Due to the maximum attainable flame lengths of 25ft a lower cost and less intrusive fuel break could be attained if the break were limited to 25ft from the existing structures. The treatment must be conducted with a mowing machine capable of not creating soil disturbance or leaving ruts greater than 1.5 inches.

PALEONTOLOGY

Affected Environment: The proposed action is located in an area mapped as the Uinta Formation (Tweto 1979) which the BLM has classified as a Condition I formation meaning it is known to produce scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Excavations into the underlying bedrock formation to bury cables, set anode beds or pour footers for structures has the potential to impact scientifically important fossil resources.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There would be no new impacts to fossil resources under the No Action Alternative.

Mitigation: If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation at any time during compressor plant expansion a paleontological monitor shall be present for the excavations.

RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

Affected Environment: The proposed action is within the Little Hills allotment (06006). The allotment is used from spring through fall by Burke Brothers as part of their yearly livestock operation on the public lands.

Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action: Soil and vegetation disturbance associated with the proposed action will result in the short and long term loss of one (1) AUM of livestock forage.

Environmental Consequences of the No Action Alternative: There will be no change from the present situation.

Mitigation: See Native, Non-Native and Vegetation sections above.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY: This action is consistent with the scope of impacts addressed in the White River ROD/RMP. The cumulative impacts of oil and gas activities are addressed in the White River ROD/RMP for each resource value that would be affected by the proposed action.

REFERENCES CITED:

Hauck, F Richard
2001 Cultural Resource Evaluation of Proposed well Locations & Pipeline Corridors in the Magnolia Locality of Rio Blanco County, Colorado. Archeological-Environmental Research Corporation, Bountiful, Utah.

Pointkoswki, Michael
1998 Class III Cultural Resources Inventory for the Proposed Greasewood Gulch Short Power Line Connection in Rio Blanco County, Colorado for White River Electric Association. Grand River Institute, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Tweto, Ogden
1979 Geologic Map of Colorado. United States Geologic Survey, Department of the Interior, Reston, Virginia.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED: None

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Name	Title	Area of Responsibility
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Air Quality
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
Tamara Meagley	Natural Resource Specialist	Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
Michael Selle	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Paleontological Resources
Mark Hafkenschiel	Rangeland Management Specialist	Invasive, Non-Native Species, Vegetation, Rangeland Management
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Animal Species, Wildlife
Bo Brown	Hazmat Collateral	Wastes, Hazardous or Solid
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Water Quality, Surface and Ground Hydrology and Water Rights
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wetlands and Riparian Zones
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Wilderness
Nate Dieterich	Hydrologist	Soils
Lisa Belmonte	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Terrestrial and Aquatic
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Access and Transportation
Ken Holsinger	Natural Resource Specialist	Fire Management
Robert Fowler	Forester	Forest Management
Paul Daggett	Mining Engineer	Geology and Minerals
Penny Brown	Realty Specialist	Realty Authorizations
Chris Ham	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation
Keith Whitaker	Natural Resource Specialist	Visual Resources
Valerie Dobrich	Natural Resource Specialist	Wild Horses

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR)

CO-110-2005-008-EA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)/RATIONALE: The environmental assessment and analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed action have been reviewed. The approved mitigation measures (listed below) result in a Finding of No Significant Impact on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not necessary to further analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action.

DECISION/RATIONALE: It is my decision to approve the proposed action with the following mitigation measures.

MITIGATION MEASURES:

1. Surface portions of the ROW that will receive high volumes of traffic with gravel or black top. Re-seed or gravel the remaining portion of the ROW to reduce fugitive dust production during wind events and periods of increased human activity.

2. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the project operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are uncovered during any project or construction activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate area of the find that might further disturb such materials, and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO). Within five working days the AO will inform the operator as to:

- whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- the mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the site can be used (assuming in situ preservation is not necessary)
- a timeframe for the AO to complete an expedited review under 36 CFR 800-11 to confirm, through the State Historic Preservation Officer, that the findings of the AO are correct and that mitigation is appropriate.

If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation costs. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.

3. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone, with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred object, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

4. The operator will monitor the right-of-way for a minimum of five years post construction to detect the presence of noxious and invasive species. The operator will be responsible for eradication of noxious weeds and cheatgrass on the right-of-way using materials and methods authorized in advance by the Field Manager.

5. Any structure associated with the compressor station that may serve as a perch (e.g., electric, telephone poles) be as low in stature as is safe and practical and conditioned to effectively deter use by large raptors (i.e., eagles, buteo hawks, great horned owls). The methods selected for implementing this objective, as well as scaled drawings detailing these methods, should be provided for approval by the BLM Authorized Officer and included in the official case file.

6. Removal of tall vegetation (e.g., serviceberry, pinyon pine) will be permitted. However, removal of sagebrush must be addressed in a separate action if vegetation removal is deemed necessary to protect the plant from fire danger.

7. No hazardous or other solid wastes would be generated under the no-action alternative.

8. Re-seed or gravel the remaining portion of the ROW to reduce impacts of heavy rain and overland flows. Install proper drainage structures at necessary locations (e.g. culvert, drain dip).

9. Promptly recontour and revegetate all disturbed areas with Native Seed mix # 2.

Native Seed Mix #2			
2	Western wheatgrass (Rosanna) Indian ricegrass (Rimrock) Bluebunch wheatgrass (Whitmar) Thickspike wheatgrass (Critana) Needle and thread Globemallow	2 1 2 2 0.5 1	Deep Loam, Loamy 10"-14", Loamy Breaks, Loamy Slopes, Rolling Loam, Valley Bench

10. Due to the maximum attainable flame lengths of 25 ft., a lower cost and less intrusive fuel break could be attained if the break were limited to 25 ft. from the existing structures. The treatment must be conducted with a mowing machine capable of not creating soil disturbance or leaving ruts greater than 1.5 inches.

11. If it becomes necessary to excavate into the underlying bedrock formation at any time during compressor plant expansion, a paleontological monitor shall be present for the excavations.

12. Due to #10 above, allowances for a 50 foot strip outside of the existing fence, can be roller chopped/brush beating, but not clear stripped. The fence is not to be moved to incorporate the 50 foot strip.

COMPLIANCE/MONITORING: Compliance will be conducted by the realty staff every five years.

NAME OF PREPARER: Penny Brown

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Caroline Hollowed

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: Kurt E. Walter
Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 05/24/05

ATTACHMENTS: Location map of the proposed action.

Cathodic Protection Specifications from Brad Hollenbaugh, Xcel Energy

Location of Proposed Action
CO-110-2005-008-EA